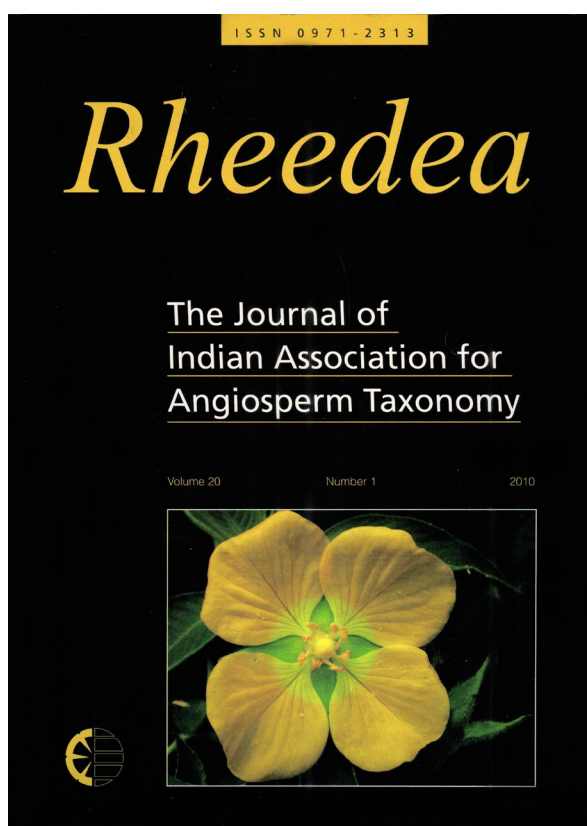




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A new species of *Cleistanthus* (Euphorbiaceae) from Andaman Islands

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Abstract

A new species, *Cleistanthus andamanicus* N. Balach., Gastmans et Chakrab. is described from the Andaman Islands, India.

Keywords: Andaman Islands, *Cleistanthus*, Euphorbiaceae, New species

Introduction

The genus *Cleistanthus* is represented in India by seven species (Balakrishnan & Chakrabarty, 2007). Of these, two species occur in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, viz., *C. balakrishnanii* Chakrab. and *C. oblongifolius* (Roxb.) Müll.Arg. Two collections from the Andaman Islands found to be related to *C. balakrishnanii* but differing in certain features, which are significant to warrant treating them as a new species.

Cleistanthus andamanicus N. Balach., Gastmans et Chakrab., *sp. nov.*

Fig. 1

Cleistanthus andamanicus N. Balach., Gastmans et Chakrab. differt a *C. balakrishnanii* Chakrab. ramulis et petiolis glabris, foliis coriaceis glabris, ad apicem breviacuminatis, nervis lateralibus paucis, fructibus glabris.

Typus: INDIA, **Andaman & Nicobar Islands**, South Andamans, South Cinque Island, 27.3.1997, N. Balachandran 736 (Holotypus, CAL; Isotypii, AURO).

Drypetes ovalis sensu N. Balach. et Gastmans in J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc. 103: 140. 2006 p.p., non (J.J. Sm.) Pax & K. Hoffm. 1922.

Cleistanthus robustus sensu Sumathi et al. in Rheede 19: 70, f. 2. 2009, non Müll.Arg. 1866.

Shrubs, 3 – 4 m high; bark brown; branchlets terete below, flattened and striate towards apices, 1 – 4 mm thick, glabrous, brown. Leaves oblong, oblong-elliptic to ovate-elliptic, 5 – 15 × 2.5 – 7 cm, rounded, obtuse to subacute at base, shortly decurrent, entire along margins, acuminate at apex (acumen 5 – 10 mm long), coriaceous,

glabrous, remaining green above, paler and often glaucescent below when dry; midrib inconspicuously raised above, conspicuously raised beneath; lateral nerves 4 – 7 per side, faint, arcuate, anastomosing near margins; tertiary nerves faint, laxly reticulate; nervules inconspicuous; petioles semiterete, 3 – 8 × 1 – 2 mm, rugose, glabrous; stipules linear-subulate, c. 5 mm long, deciduous. Male flowers not seen. Female flowers axillary or occasionally slightly supra-axillary, fasciculate or solitary, subsessile. Calyx 2.5 – 4 mm long, fulvous-pilose or sericeous outside, glabrous inside; tube shortly obconic, 5-lobed; lobes ovate-triangular or broadly triangular, 1.5 – 3 × 1 – 1.5 mm. Petals 5, obovate, 2 – 3 × 1 – 1.5 mm, emarginate. Ovary subglobose, c. 1.5 mm in diam., ochraceous-sericeous; styles 3, c. 1 mm long, bifid at apex. Capsules sessile to subsessile, somewhat depressed-globose, c. 7 × 10 mm, 3-lobed, glabrous, dark brown when dry; seeds suborbicular or broadly ovoid-oblong, c. 5 × 4 mm, somewhat flattened, brown when dry.

Flowering & Fruiting: March – April.

Habitat: Scarce in dry deciduous or stunted evergreen forests up to 600 m altitude.

Specimens examined: INDIA, **Andaman & Nicobar Islands**, South Andamans, South Cinque Island, 27.3.1997, N. Balachandran 736 (Holotype, CAL; Isotypes, AURO); North Andaman Island, Saddle Peak National Park, Kalpong hills, 9.4.2001, R. Sumathi 4708 (Paratype, PBL).

Notes: It is closely related to *C. balakrishnanii* Chakrab., but differing in branchlets and petioles

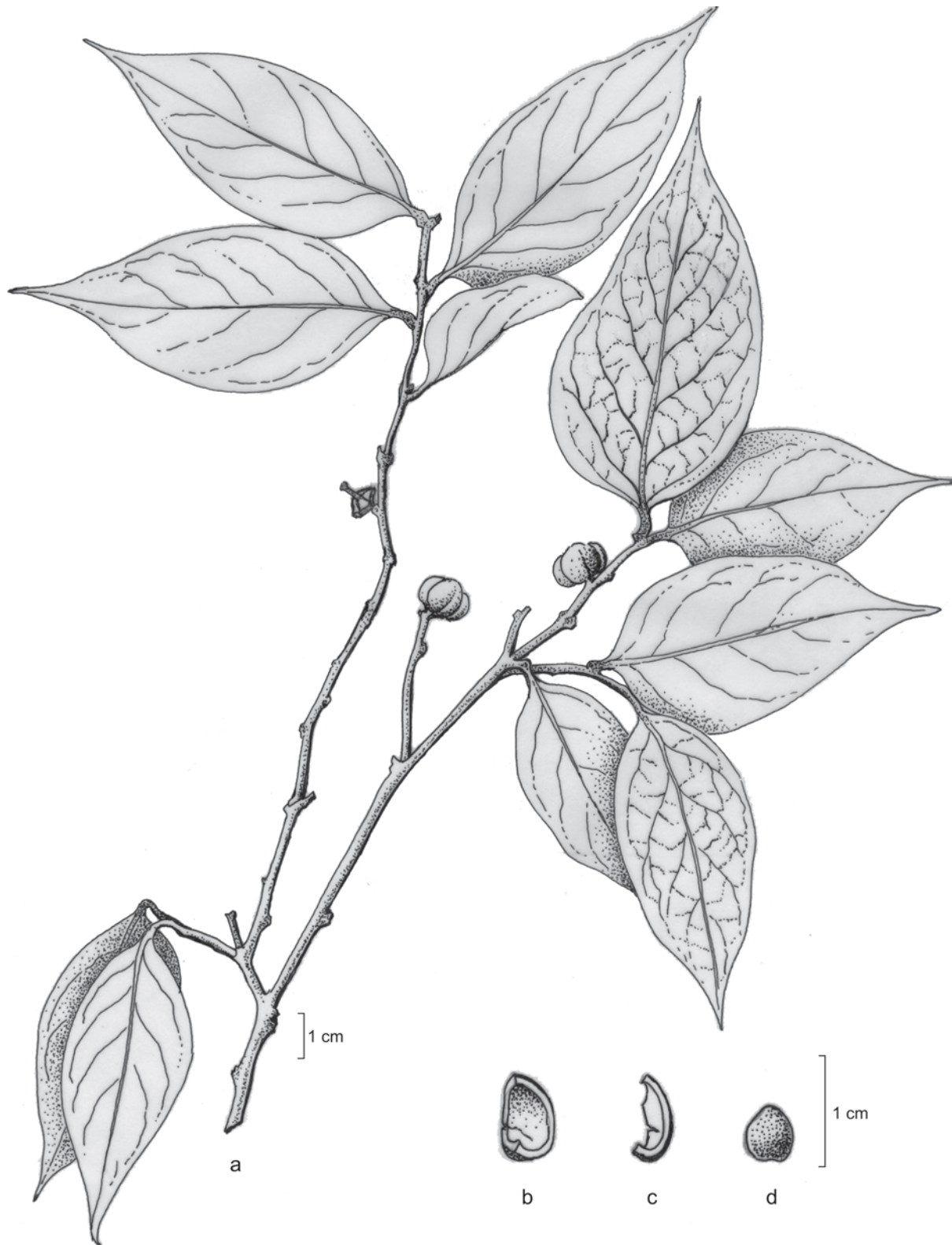


Fig. 1. *Cleistanthus andamanicus* N. Balach., Gastmans et Chakrab., *sp. nov.*: a. A twig with fruits; b, c. Broken cocci of fruit; d. Seed (from N. Balachandran 736, CAL).

Table 1. A comparison between *Cleistanthus andamanicus* sp. nov. and *C. balakrishnanii*

Character	<i>C. andamanicus</i> sp. nov.	<i>C. balakrishnanii</i>
Branchlets	glabrous	rufous-villous when young, scattered pilose when mature
Leaves	coriaceous, glabrous; acumen 5 – 10 mm long; lateral nerves 4 – 7 per side	chartaceous, sparsely rufous-pilose beneath; cauda 15 – 30 mm long; lateral nerves 7 – 10 per side
Petioles	glabrous	scattered puberulous
Fruits	glabrous	scattered ochraceous-puberulous

being glabrous, leaves coriaceous, glabrous, with short acumen and lateral nerves fewer, fruits glabrous (Table 1).

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